

Ludlow Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116099
Local Authority	Southampton
Inspection number	357879
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Janet Sinclair

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	262
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Pitcher
Headteacher	Jeannie Gibbons
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2008
School address	Ludlow Road Woolston Southampton SO19 2EU
Telephone number	02380575752
Fax number	02380575754
Email address	info@ludlow-inf.southampton.sch.uk

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 27 lessons or part-lessons, observing nine teachers and several teaching assistants. Inspectors also held meetings with members of the governing body, senior staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised samples of pupils' work, and looked at a wide range of documentation, including policies, the school improvement plan and records of pupils' progress. They considered the 103 responses from questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Attainment and rates of progress for all groups of pupils, but particularly the achievement of higher attaining boys.
- The extent to which teachers involve pupils in their own learning, particularly the use of targets to help them improve.
- The impact of all leaders in inspiring staff to drive improvement and accelerate progress.

Information about the school

Ludlow is larger than the average-sized infant school. There is a below-average proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, some of whom are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average; these pupils have mainly moderate learning and speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Ludlow Infant is an outstanding school. It has a strong caring ethos within which pupils can develop fully both academically and personally. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are passionate about providing the best possible education for the pupils in their care and are supported extremely well by dedicated teaching and support staff. Parents and carers are extremely happy with the school and what it provides. Comments such as, 'Ludlow gives children a fantastic start to their education' and 'My daughter enjoys school enormously' exemplify this.

Children make a good start to their learning in the Reception classes. Careful planning for small group work led by teachers ensures that the children make good progress. Additionally, there is a good range of independent activities and exciting events for the children to engage in. However, occasionally children's independent learning is weakened because planning does not indicate how staff might recognise and extend children's learning during these activities. Pupils make excellent progress in Years 1 and 2 so that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average, and sometimes high, and has been over several years. Pupils' achievement is outstanding. All groups achieve extremely well given their starting points. This is in part because the school quickly identifies any issues through rigorous tracking and careful analysis. For example, higher attaining boys have been more successful this year due to targeted interventions which challenge them more fully and the introduction of topics that engage their interest. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English benefit from extremely well focused support, which is tailored to their specific needs, enabling them to make exceptional progress. Learning support assistants are excellent in this context.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and love the challenge of learning. This is reflected in their excellent behaviour and strong motivation to learn. They have an outstanding awareness of how to be safe in school and are clear about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Exceptional spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is seen in the high levels of respect pupils have for each other, their clear understanding of right and wrong and the excellent rapport between the different cultures represented within the school.

High-quality teaching, excellent relationships, a stimulating curriculum, the rigorous tracking of pupils' progress and excellent pastoral care all support pupils' outstanding progress. Teachers' excellent subject knowledge and well-paced, stimulating lessons ensure all pupils are inspired to give of their best. Very effective marking and oral feedback ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve. Through rigorous self-evaluation, senior leaders have a clear and accurate view of the school and are continuously striving to secure excellence across all areas of their work. The school has

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successfully built on its good position at the last inspection to attain high quality provision. This shows that the school has an excellent capacity for further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve planning in the Reception classes for activities that children undertake by themselves so that staff can fully extend their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children start in Reception with skills that are below those expected for their age but, by the end of Year 2, attainment is at least above average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work hard and are highly motivated. This was clearly seen in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, where lower attaining pupils were using repeated addition and simple multiplication to work out how many ears six donkeys had. They were so determined to get the right answer, it was almost possible to hear the brain cells firing! High levels of enjoyment are a hallmark of many lessons. This was noticeable in a Year 2 dance lesson, where pupils were developing an African dance routine as part of an end-of-year performance. Pupils had great fun as they tried to improve their skills; they were also very perceptive when assessing each other's work. Pupils enjoy working in pairs, as in a Year 1 literacy lesson where they discussed what they were going to write on their postcards, sharing their ideas and considering the appropriate style of writing needed. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose first language is not English make the same outstanding progress as their peers.

Pupils behave extremely well and are very kind and helpful to each other and polite and engaging when talking to adults. They have an excellent understanding of a healthy lifestyle. They know that sugar is bad for their teeth and that fruit and exercise keep them healthy. Year 2 pupils, keen to improve their diet, kept a diary to show their healthy eating over a half-term holiday. The eco team is very aware of the importance of walking to school because 'cars pollute'. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community through activities such as planting trees in the school grounds, participation in the Southampton citizenship awards and the enterprise scheme, where they were involved in buying and selling goods for a profit. Year 2 pupils have also written to Her Majesty The Queen to get permission to drive past Buckingham Palace when they visit London.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils, who respond fully and confidently. Skilful questioning, followed by very good opportunities for pupils to explain their methods, maximises pupils' involvement and accelerates their progress. This was clearly seen in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils were subtracting 20 from a given number, using a 100 square. One pupil's explanation was, 'I picture the 100 square in my head and jump up twice to subtract 20.' Excellent modelling by teachers and support staff helps all pupils, but particularly those whose first language is not English. Support staff are very well deployed; they know what pupils are expected to learn and work hard to help them understand and overcome errors. Teachers make excellent use of subject-specific vocabulary such as 'time connectives', 'polysyllabic words', 'adjectives' and 'sentence extension' and pupils use them confidently. Detailed assessments, marking and self-assessment ensure pupils are fully involved in their learning and improving their work.

Curricular topics are designed to engage the interest of all pupils, while strong cross-curricular links provide creative themes. For example, a topic on robots enabled work in science, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). Visits to the Natural History museum, art day, visits from the police, a nurse and a dental hygienist, and clubs such as choir, football and ICT, provide excellent enrichment.

The school knows its pupils extremely well and takes outstanding care of them. This ensures they feel exceptionally safe in school and confident of adult support should they

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need it. Specific targets for able, gifted and talented pupils are shared with their parents and carers and used to ensure they maximise their potential. Well-established systems and excellent links with outside agencies ensure that all pupils, but particularly vulnerable pupils and their families, are very well supported. The school works very hard to improve attendance, which is average, and has reduced the number of persistent absentees. Homework is provided for those who are absent for extended periods and the school has also used parent advocates from specific parental groups to support the school in improving attendance. The school is determined that poor attendance does not slow pupils' achievement and in this it has been highly successful.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Senior leaders are very successful in motivating all staff to work together to achieve excellent outcomes for pupils. The staff view themselves as a 'community of enquirers', always striving to improve, and say they are proud to be members of staff at the school. The very careful analysis of data by senior staff and subject leaders ensures that any weaknesses in achievement are addressed immediately and monitored carefully to ensure lasting improvement. This very quickly closes gaps between groups, thus ensuring similarly outstanding progress for all and, coupled with the excellent work done to support vulnerable pupils, demonstrates the school's outstanding commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination.

The governing body provides effective support and a good level of challenge to the school. Although some are quite newly appointed, between them governors have a wealth of experience and expertise which they use very well in helping to determine the strategic direction of the school. Excellent partnerships with parents and carers keep them well informed and fully involved, for example through homework initiatives such as the 'Family Challenge' and 'Share a Book'. Other partnerships like the Sports Partnership and the headteacher's outreach work make an excellent contribution to pupils' personal and academic development.

Safeguarding is outstanding, with excellent policies and procedures in place to ensure the safety of pupils. The caretaker is particularly vigilant in this respect and the school fully involves pupils in monitoring safe practices. The school has excellent links with its local community, for example through its participation in Southampton in Bloom and by ensuring high quality bilingual support at meetings for parents and carers, and it has worked hard to develop a link with a school in Worcestershire. In auditing and evaluating

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its provision for community cohesion, the school acknowledges that global links have been less successful.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Good relationships and a welcoming environment ensure that children become confident happy learners who engage well with all that is on offer. During the inspection, they were particularly excited by the holes that were found in the outdoor area and generated a great deal of discussion and investigation. They made good use of tape measures, binoculars and cameras as they considered all the evidence and wrote posters to hang on the trees to try to solve the mystery. Children know how to stay healthy by eating fruit at break times and know that too much sugar is bad for their teeth. They make good progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy, because of the strong emphasis on teaching letters and sounds and the good opportunities they have to write in a variety of relevant contexts. Good opportunities to speak in front of an audience, for example in their assembly for parents and carers, help them to become confident speakers, as was seen when they interviewed each other using microphones. Teachers and teaching assistants make regular assessments of the children's learning, particularly their writing, which they use to group children for work that is led by the teacher. Children clearly see themselves as writers and enjoy the opportunities provided.

Children willingly take part in independent activities, behave well and freely share resources with each other. They enjoy using the outdoor area, where they ride their wheeled vehicles and enjoy physical activity. Good leadership has led to effective relationships with parents and carers and a good working atmosphere for children that help them to make good progress.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

An above-average number of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire. The questionnaires show that the vast majority of parents and carers are happy with the school and what it provides. They consider that their children enjoy all that the school has to offer and are extremely safe and well looked after, and the inspectors agree.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ludlow Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 262 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	72	28	27	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	81	79	21	20	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	56	54	42	41	2	2	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	65	33	32	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	69	67	32	31	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	60	58	39	38	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	56	54	44	43	3	3	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	63	61	33	32	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	62	60	36	34	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	55	40	39	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	47	48	47	6	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	69	67	30	29	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	78	76	22	21	2	2	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



24 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ludlow Infant School, Southampton SO19 2EU

I am writing to tell you how much we enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being so friendly and helping us with the inspection.

Yours is an outstanding school and we fully agree with what you told us? it is a really fun place in which to learn. Here are some of the things we particularly liked about your school.

- You get off to a good start in the Reception classes.
- You make outstanding progress in Years 1 and 2, due to excellent teaching.
- You find lessons great fun, behave extremely well and really enjoy school.
- You have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe and live healthily.
- There are plenty of exciting things for you to do in school, on visits and in after-school clubs.
- The school looks after you extremely well and you, in turn, take extremely good care of each other.
- Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school as school councillors and members of the eco team and in the many other responsibilities you take on.
- The headteacher and all the staff manage your school extremely well.

We have asked your headteacher and staff to help those of you in Reception learn more from your play.

You can help the school get even better by continuing to work hard in lessons.

We enjoyed talking to you and wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Janet Sinclair

Lead inspector

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